



U.S. Forest Service
Klamath National Forest
1711 South Main Street
Yreka CA 96097
Voice: 530-842-6131
Email: klamathinfo@fs.fed.us
Web: www.fs.usda.gov/klamath

Facebook: [U.S.Forest Service – Klamath National Forest](#)



News Release

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Public Pony Fire information:
530-643-7669
Email: KNFPonyfire@gmail.com

Media Contact: Ian Shackleford
530-841-4485
ishackleford@fs.fed.us

Pony Fire Morning Update: June 11, 2016

Happy Camp, CA -- The Pony Fire is burning on the Klamath National Forest, west of Highway 96 and about fifteen miles southwest of Happy Camp. The fire is burning within the perimeter of the 2001 Swillup Fire. As of Saturday morning, the fire is 1,135 acres and 20% contained. Warmer, dryer and windier conditions are expected on Saturday. More than 850 firefighters are now working on the fire.

On Friday, crews continued repairing and improving existing containment lines in preparation for strategic burning. Careful burning of adjacent fuels will help strengthen the containment lines. Depending on weather conditions, burning may begin Saturday. More smoke may be visible because of the planned ignitions.

Another day of preparation work remains on the containment lines for the southeast side, and work on the southwest flank is expected to take about four more days. Firefighters will also continue to work today with landowners on contingency structure protection along Highway 96.

The Pony Fire is in the vicinity of the Crawford Vegetation Management Project, a planned 1,600-acre forest health and fuels reduction project. Crews are looking for opportunities to protect the project area.

Extremely steep terrain continues to challenge firefighters, and numerous snags and logs from the 2001 fire make firefighting extremely hazardous. Burning of dead fuels is driving much of the fire activity on the Pony Fire.

Two fixed-wing aircraft and nine helicopters have been assigned to the fire to provide air support. Aircraft are used for water and retardant drops, transporting firefighters and supplies, and reconnaissance. If needed, a Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT), stationed near Sacramento, is also available. Fire retardant is being supplied from the Siskiyou Air Tanker Base at Siskiyou Airport.

The five-acre Dillon Fire, located west of the Pony Fire, is now 100 percent contained. Firefighters will continue to mop up and monitor it carefully for any remaining hot spots.

For the safety of the public and firefighters, a Forest Closure Order is in effect for the area around the Pony Fire. The closure includes Pony Peak Road (14N39), Pony Peak Ridge Road (15N30), Dry Lake Road (15N28) and Bear Peak Road (15N19) from its intersection with Douglas Creek Road (15N24) and continuing west to its end.

More information and maps of closed roads are available at the Klamath National Forest website (www.fs.usda.gov/klamath/).

More information, maps, and closures are also posted on Inciweb at <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4769/>.

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